



GOVERNOR'S GROWTH PLANNING COUNCIL 2 0 0 1

State Programs and Sustainable
Development Inventory, Analysis
and Recommendations Report

Inventory of State Programs

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INTRODUCTION

In February 2000, Governor Almond issued Executive Order 00-2 creating the Growth Planning Council. This thirty member Council was charged, among other things, to:

Inventory all existing State programs, policies and expenditures to evaluate their effect on sustainable development and the preservation and enhancement of environmental quality and resources;

And

...recommend to the Governor and the General Assembly any changes in state and federal laws, regulations or procedures necessary to encourage sustainable growth in Rhode Island.

In undertaking this task the Council was mindful of the numerous state activities that are not very significant in terms of their ability to affect sustainable development. Instead, the Council opted to examine those programs that are perceived to influence growth and for which there appears to be opportunity to readily refocus that influence.

A list of 21 programs was developed and formed the basis for this inventory (see Table 1). Key staff in each agency were identified and they were provided with standardized questionnaires (see Exhibit 1), which they were asked to complete prior to personal interviews. Following the interviews, Statewide Planning Program staff drafted program summaries and recommendations. These summaries were then provided to the agency staff for comment. In addition to the original "list of 21", review of the assent fee structure of the Coastal Resources Management Council was added.

All questions on the draft should be directed to Ms. Grace Beiser at 222-2079 or John O'Brien at 222-5772.

Figure 1

TOP 21 LIST

ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF (DOA)

State Properties (siting of state offices and public buildings) – policy, financing
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program - financing
Local Comprehensive Plans – policy, facilitation
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – policy, facilitation
State Guide Plan - policy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC)

Enterprise Zone Program – policy, financing
Certificates of Critical Economic Concern – regulation, facilitation
Mill Buildings Revitalization - financing
Industrial Facilities Corporation/ Industrial Recreational Building Authority – financing

EDC & DEM

Revolving Loan Fund for Brownfields - financing

ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF (DOE)

School Construction Aid – policy, regulation, financing

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF (DEM)

Individual Sewer Disposal System (ISDS) program – regulation
Open Space Grants, Recreation Development Grants, Recreational Greenways Grants – financing
Clean Water Finance – financing
Agricultural Lands Preservation Fund – financing

RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION

Preservation of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes – regulation, financing

RHODE ISLAND HOUSING & MORTGAGE FINANCE CORPORATION (RIHMF)

Single-family mortgage programs - financing
Rental Production Program - financing

TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF (DOT)

Access Management Program - regulation

DOT & DOA

Transportation Improvement Program (Non-Interstate Highway Program, Bicycle-Pedestrian Program; Enhancements Program; Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program; Transit Program) - policy, facilitation

WATER RESOURCES BOARD (WRB)

Public water supply facilities – regulation, financing

PROGRAM INVENTORY

ADMINISTRATION

State Properties: Investments made by the state in urban office facilities, service centers, educational facilities and such are perceived as major contributors to urban revitalization. The state laws governing this process establish a State Properties Committee and direct the Committee to give preference to sites in urban areas where "facilities would make a significant impact on the economic vitality of the community's central business district."

The State Properties Committee's Rules and Regulations do cite the aforementioned legislation and require due consideration of urban impact factors including enterprise zones and consistency with local comprehensive plans. Preference is evidenced by numerous leases in downtown areas and investment in historic properties such as the Center General Building and the Kaiser complex in Bristol.

Recommendation: The Rules and Regulations of the State Properties Committee should be provided to the other public entities not subject to the *Public Property and Works* statute as an example of sound public policy for siting government facilities in urban locations.

Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program: This federal program is administered by the State to provide grants to 33 nonentitlement communities. In FY 2000 a total of \$5,644,000 was appropriated for this program. The goal of the program is the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunity; principally for persons of low and moderate income. The RI program's priorities are housing, economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

Revitalization programs account for about half of the program allocations. Housing rehabilitation accounts for another 25% of the program awards.

Recommendations: Continue to use the Small Cities CDBG program to promote revitalization and, to the extent practical, encourage and reward programs that emphasize the reuse and rehabilitation of existing community assets. Examples of such programs would be a down payment assistance program that prioritizes assistance to buyers of existing homes.

Comprehensive Plans: *The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act* was enacted in 1988. This landmark legislation requires that all municipalities prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan according to specific guidelines and with public input. The Act and the resulting plans provide the framework for the subsequent update of land management law at both the State and local level. Rhode Island's planning statute is unique in that it provides protection to communities from State action deemed to be inconsistent with a State approved local plan.

All thirty-nine Rhode Island municipalities have adopted plans and twenty-four of those have been approved by the State. A number of communities are in the process of preparing updates.

Aside from the protection from inconsistent State action, there is little other incentive for communities to get their plan approved by the State. In fact, some would suggest that the requirement to bring local zoning and

subdivision ordinances into compliance with a State-approved plan is a disincentive. Moreover, while State-approved plans reflect community interests that are consistent with those of the State and would thus appear to represent areas where the State would want to focus investment, the reality is that communities with approved plans are seldom treated any differently than communities that have failed to comply with approval requirements.

Recommendation: Direct State agencies that manage financial aid programs to provide meaningful incentives to communities with State-approved comprehensive plans. Such incentives should take the form of higher caps for aid and/or expanding the eligible number of programs or grants available to those communities. Incentive programs should be made available to the Growth Planning Council for review and comment.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: In order to be considered for certain grants from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, a project must be included in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the area. In Rhode Island the Statewide Planning Program prepares the CEDS and the State Planning Council acts as the CEDS Committee.

Each year eligible applicants are invited to submit project proposals for inclusion in the CEDS. These projects are scored in accordance project priority ranking criteria adopted by the CEDS Committee and only the highest scoring projects are included in the CEDS.

The scoring criteria, while aimed at identifying good economic development projects, favors urban and sustainable development projects. It rewards projects that come from distressed areas and those that reuse or rehabilitate existing facilities. Over forty percent of a projects total score is attributed to its location and environmental impact. Enterprise zones and communities with approved comprehensive plans are given preference, albeit relatively insignificant advantage. The process limits the number of applications that can be submitted by any one community in accord with a population-based formula.

Recommendation: Use the CEDS project priority rating system as a model for other state discretionary grant programs. Modify the current CEDS program by increasing the advantage given to enterprise zone applications and allow communities with State approved comprehensive plans to exceed the application cap.

Transportation Improvement Program: The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a list of transportation projects that the state intends to implement using federal highway and transit funds. It is prepared every two years and is the principle strategic element that implements the State's long range transportation plans. The current TIP allocates \$558 million of federal and state matching funds to various projects.

The TIP and the long range Ground Transportation Plan are prepared by the Statewide Planning Program acting as staff to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (the State Planning Council) for transportation planning. Working closely with RIDOT and RIPTA, the staff solicits projects, through an intense public participation effort, that are consistent with the "Fixing-it-First" theme of the Ground Transportation Plan. Various categories of projects such as the state highway program, congestion mitigation – air quality program, and the transportation enhancements program are all subject to separate project evaluation processes. Each category has the potential to target transportation investments to designated growth areas. For example, the project evaluation criteria for State highway projects does consider if the project supports an enterprise zone and/or is

consistent with the local comprehensive plan. However, the weight assigned to the criteria is not sufficient to target these investments. For several other categories, (Pavement Management, Interstate Highways, Traffic/Safety, and Bridges) the TIP includes either all eligible candidate projects or generic programs; with final selection and advancement for implementation being at RIDOTS discretion.

Recommendation: Modify the various TIP project category scoring criteria to provide advantage to those projects that support development in designated growth areas. Give priority to projects that support defined growth areas when advancing projects within discretionary TIP programs. Provide for higher cost caps and/or additional projects in enterprise zones or communities with State approved comprehensive plans.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Finance Programs. The ability to provide businesses with financing is perhaps the single most significant economic development incentive available to the Economic Development Corporation. This is done through the issue of federal or state tax-exempt bonds by the RI Industrial Facilities Corporation and the provision of mortgage insurance through the RI Industrial and Recreational Building Authority. In addition to providing businesses with market rate financing, RIIFC projects are exempt from RI sales tax.

The only limit to these programs is a federally imposed cap on the amount of such bonding a state may issue on an annual basis. RIIFC has never approached this cap. The only locational criteria are imposed by the legislatively mandated State Guide Plan review of all such projects that limits financing, of non-traded industries, to the state's older central cities.

Recommendation. Encourage the EDC to establish a goal of using 50% of all tax exempt financing authority for projects located in urban areas.

Enterprise Zones. Designation of state enterprise zones is based upon distress criteria and as such the eleven designated zones represent, for the most part, high density urban areas of disinvestment. The program offers generous tax credits to businesses locating or expanding its workforce in the zones. In addition, there are other tax incentives available to encourage lending to zone businesses as well as public improvements in the zones.

One provision of the Act is intended to use the zones as a means of directing state assistance to these areas. Specifically it calls for:

Coordination with existing programs. – To the maximum extent possible, the directors of the departments of administration, business regulation, labor and training, environmental management, workforce 2000, human services, transportation, and the Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance corporation will provide special assistance to the zones. This will include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Expedited processing;
- (2) Priority funding;
- (3) Program set asides; and
- (4) Provision of technical assistance in furtherance of the public policy enunciated in § 42-64.3-2(2).

While this could be a powerful tool in directing state investments toward these zones, it is not clear that it is being used in that fashion, nor that the agencies identified are aware of this mandate.

Recommendation: The Enterprise Zone Council should be directed to inventory the extent to which state agencies comply with the coordination mandate and recommend to the Growth Planning Council areas for improvement.

Certificate of Critical Economic Concern (CCEC). The CEC program provides expedited permit review for projects that will provide substantial job creation. Certificates are awarded by the EDC Board and they do not relieve an applicant from any regulatory requirements. A total of 19 CCEC's have been issued in the last two years.

The coordination mandate of the Enterprise Zone program calls for expedited processing, as does the Mill Revitalization Program.

Recommendation: Encourage the EDC Board to limit the award of CCEC's to projects that are either located in an enterprise zone or are part of a building rehabilitation or brownfield project

Mill Revitalization Program. This program provides specific tax incentives for the rehabilitation and reuse of older mill buildings that are proposed by local communities. Businesses operating in such buildings are eligible for tax credits comparable to those provided in enterprise zones. In addition, designation of a building under this program automatically qualifies it for an award of a Certificate of Critical Economic Concern.

Eligible properties must be fifty years old, have at least 2 floors and be used primarily for manufacturing, wholesale trade or other commercial purposes. It is felt that additional incentives are required to improve the impact of this program.

Recommendation. Engage Grow Smart RI and the Main Street Program in a promotion effort for this program.

Brownfields Remediation. This is a joint effort of the EDC and DEM to bring contaminated sites into economic reuse. The program is capitalized by a \$1 million grant from EPA that can provide low interest loans for cleanup of contaminated sites. There is concern that this capitalization is insufficient to address the need.

Recommendation. DEM establish an annual assessment on brownfield sites to capitalize the revolving loan cleanup fund.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

School Construction Aid: Under traditional city planning, the local elementary school functioned as the physical and activity center of a neighborhood. Today, the location of elementary and secondary schools in Rhode Island is influenced by a number of factors, including state guidelines governing eligibility of local districts to receive state aid for approved school construction projects. State funds for school construction aid are budgeted at \$30.8 million for FY2001.

Siting schools to minimize the need for auto travel and school bus transportation and to be close to other municipal facilities such as libraries can help promote smart growth and sustainable development objectives. The current RI Department of Education guidelines to communities contemplating new school facilities, additions, and renovations contain a number of elements that reinforce smart growth objectives. Several other guidelines, however, make it very difficult to site or renovate schools in urban or village centers. These include:

- requiring that the cost per square foot of a renovation may not exceed that generally accepted for new construction;
- recommending that the school site be of sufficient size "to accommodate the building and planned future additions as well as outdoor education facilities, parking, bus turnarounds, delivery areas...."
- presenting minimum site acreage figures of 10 acres plus one additional acre for each 100 elementary students, 20 acres + one for each 100 junior high students, and 30 acres + one for each 100 high school students;

Recommendations: Revise the current guidelines for new schools, additions and renovations, to encourage and reward projects that enable students to safely walk or bicycle to school, that site new schools in relation to existing or planned village centers, residential areas, community facilities, and public transportation, that provide incentives for renovation of existing schools and for schools in historic buildings, and that incorporate innovative techniques providing that the buildings are able to support an appropriate educational program. Direct DOE to examine the Maryland model which eliminated school acreage requirements to achieve smart growth benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Compact Development. Promoting growth in existing or new town and village centers requires the provision of certain infrastructure in the form of water supply and waste water treatment that is generally not available via public systems in rural areas. DEM has worked with URI in developing new on-site wastewater treatment systems that minimize land area and are compatible with compact development. However, the siting of such systems with on site drinking water supplies is not encouraged.

Given the public's high expectation for safe drinking water and the technical rigor of providing high quality drinking water, the Department of Health strongly encourages the extension of existing public water systems rather than the development of private wells or new small public water systems. This is because private wells are unregulated and unprotected, and small water systems often lack technical expertise, are not financially viable and are prone to failure.

Recommendation: The State and federal agencies that regulate and finance waste water treatment and drinking water supplies need to come together in a task force to address how the State can remove barriers and provide incentives for communities to provide this infrastructure to promote sustainable compact development in rural and suburban areas. This task force will report its findings to the Growth Planning Council with specific recommendations on financing, permitting and regulation that will promote the preservation and

expansion of town and village centers. Members of the task force should include USEPA, DEM, EDC, the Department of Health, the Water Resources Board, the Rhode Island Builder's Association and the RI Clean Water Finance Agency.

Open Space Grant Management. DEM manages numerous grant programs such as open space, greenways, and agricultural land preservation that preserve open space. The scoring criterion for these various grant programs tend to weigh heavily the objectives of the particular program with minimum consideration given to targeted investment policies such as enterprise zones or how a project conforms to local long range plans. While these plans are beginning to be recognized as valuable investment tools, the competitive nature of these programs and the limited resources available for investment would appear to warrant that additional incentives be provided for those projects that can demonstrate a direct correlation with the implementation of a State approved local comprehensive plan.

Recommendation. DEM adopt grant management regulations that provide incentives for those projects that demonstrate specific consistency with the approved local comprehensive plan or plans and/or are located within enterprise zones. Such incentives may be in the form of increasing the grant amount cap or the maximum number of grants that may be awarded in a particular jurisdiction.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Tax Credits. Historic preservation programs focus on the older built environment, and most preservation programming is concentrated in community centers and in older neighborhoods. The primary financial incentives for preservation are income tax credits, which are designed to assist in keeping these places attractive and economically viable. Federal tax credits (20%) encourage major rehabilitations of income-producing historic buildings (commercial, residential rental, industrial); state tax credits (20%) encourage maintenance of historic houses. There is no established cap for these credits. Thousands of buildings in urban neighborhoods and in older town and city centers are potentially eligible for credits, but the credits are not claimed as often as they could be.

Recommendation: Improved public education of this program by organizations such as Grow Smart RI and the Main Street Program would serve to increase the utilization of this tool and increase investment in older buildings.

RHODE ISLAND HOUSING

Affordable Housing: RI Housing manages a number of programs that attempt to address supply of and access to affordable housing. The HOME Investment Partnerships Block Grant Program provides federal funds to increase the supply of affordable housing. Priority is given to projects that provide affordable housing through rehabilitation in neighborhood revitalization areas. Such locations take advantage of higher density and access to transportation, services and utilities. In the past two years the HOME program has approved \$6.5 million for 75 projects that will result in 507 units of affordable housing. Only 16 of those units are new construction and of those only nine are in rural areas. RI Housing supplements the HOME program

with predevelopment loans and other assistance.

The state's Rental Housing Production program is based upon an allocation of federal low income tax credits augmented by RI Housing mortgage financing. The vast majority of the rental units produced under this program are located in urban and infill areas. There has been limited new construction in suburban areas in response to demonstrated need for low-income rental housing.

The First Homes Program provides opportunities for first time homebuyers who could not otherwise afford a home. Assistance is provided by reduced rate mortgages and down payment assistance. While new homes are eligible, price limitations result in approximately 98% of the mortgages going to existing homes. Similarly, price influences location and about 70% of the homes are located in urban communities.

Recommendation: Urban, suburban, and rural communities are struggling to provide affordable housing opportunities. In urban communities the issue is one of reversing a history of disinvestments to attract the type of development that can stabilize and revitalize neighborhoods. In other areas, this issue is often one of siting either rental or single-family units in such a manner as to maintain a level of affordability for both the consumer and the host community. Examples of such developments abound and community leaders need to be made aware of such contemporary solutions to these problems. The proposed Planning Institute can play an effective role in this effort as can the RI Housing Resources Commission in their promotion of the Neighborhood Opportunities Program recently proposed by the Governor for a \$25 million bond issue.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

Access Management. An important transportation and land use issue focuses on preservation of transportation corridors by better managing the adjacent land use access to these corridors. This can be achieved by controlling access through either acquisition or land management.

Recommendation: Direct the State Planning Council to include transportation corridor preservation as a priority in the update of the Ground Transportation Plan. Direct RIDOT and Statewide Planning to support initiatives in access management that provide technical and financial assistance to local communities interested in implementing land management solutions.

Urban and Town Centers Investments. Special categories of federal funds such as Transportation Enhancements and Congestion Mitigation, Air Quality programs have been used effectively to improve transportation activities in built-up areas. In addition, major investments such as the realignment of I 195 will complement efforts to expand the revitalization of downtown Providence.

Recommendation: Direct RIDOT and State Planning Council to continue existing practice of promoting sustainability and quality of life aspects of transportation programs with the use of available program resources. (See Administration recommendation on TIP).

Commuter Rail. Expansion of rail service to a new commuter rail station at T.F. Green will have numerous positive growth impacts for the area. It will make Green the only airport with access to the improved

Northeast Corridor. At the same time, calls to extend commuter rail service south of Warwick to Washington County raise the issue of what impact such service would have on promoting increased residential growth as these areas become potential bedroom communities for the Providence and Boston markets.

Recommendation: Studies of future expansion of commuter rail service should include an analysis of the growth impacts of such service along the rail corridor as well as guidance to communities on efficient methods of dealing with such growth.

WATER RESOURCES

Water Allocation: Currently in Rhode Island, property can be developed regardless of whether the capacity of the existing water supply is known let alone sustainable. In 1999, the General Assembly granted the Water Resources Board the sole authority to devise a fair and equitable allocation of water resources among users and uses. Studies are now underway to inventory the sustainable supply of surface and groundwater. This information will enable state and municipal planners to revise local comprehensive plans and land management regulations based upon projected water supply. Systems are in place to ensure policy integration and consistency via State Guide Plan elements, comprehensive plans, water supply system management plans and watershed planning.

Recommendation: The water supply information being developed by the Board together with capacity analyses of water systems demands that the Board be an active participant in the recommended Compact Development Infrastructure Task Force (see DEM programs).

Water Resources Protection: The Water Resources Board has been active in protecting water resources through acquisition of watershed lands for both surface and groundwater sources. Aside from the Big River Reservoir, the Board has protected over 2,600 acres of open space and has been effective in leveraging their investments with other open space and agricultural preservation programs.

Recommendation: The Board should be encouraged to continue such water resource protection investments. Of particular concern are the protection of wellhead areas in Washington County where current and future water supply will rely on subsurface resources.

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Assent Fees: The Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) is charged with planning for and management of the resources of the state's coastal region. As such, a Council assent is required for all developments within the coastal zone including a 200-foot contiguous area from the most inland shoreline feature.

The CRMC's fee schedule for commercial and industrial projects is based upon the estimated project cost. A

project that represents a substantial investment can be subject to a fee that runs into the tens of thousands of dollars. In an urban area the proposed facility would normally occupy a relatively small site in the coastal zone. Unlike building code fees, project costs do not correlate to the amount of work required by regulatory staff. A fee based upon site size, such as DEM's wetlands fees, would seem to treat urban projects more equitably.

While fees account for approximately \$600,000 in CRMC generated revenue, they are not restricted receipts and thus do not impact the Council's capacity to staff this function. Moreover, Council staff indicates that most large fees come from projects located in the southern part of the state.

Recommendation: Request the Coastal Resources Management Council to restructure their fee schedule for urban projects to one that would use site size, not estimated project cost, as the basis for the assent fee.

ANALYSIS: EFFECTS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Basics

In beginning the process of reviewing Rhode Island's program's and their impact on growth it is wise to recall the original charge to the Growth Planning Council by the Governor in his Executive Order.

Executive Order 00-2

3. The Council shall:

B. Inventory all existing State programs, policies and expenditures to evaluate their effect on sustainable development and the preservation and enhancement of environmental quality and resources;

C. Recommend ways of encouraging growth in economically and environmentally sound locations;

In a like manner, as we focus our analysis in response to the charge it is also helpful to define some of the more important terms in that charge. For this, like other parts of the analysis, we looked to see what others were doing in this area.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Minnesota Statutes, Section 4A.07)

SMART GROWTH simply means that the state won't use taxpayer money to subsidize building new subdivisions, new malls, new schools, or new roads in out-lying areas, but will direct public resources close to existing cities and towns ("Maryland's Smart Growth Program", K. Schneider, Great Lakes Bulletin)

Measurement Standards

In examining the programs selected, it became obvious that any analysis as to the program's impact on sustainable development and growth was, at best, subjective. That is not to say that observations regarding program improvement in certain areas are not made but rather we attempted to determine if we were working with the appropriate "tools" to accomplish the mission. Again, we looked to see what other states were doing in this area and identified nine tools that appear to be the most common responses to uncontrolled growth.

Key Tools For Smart Growth Used By Other States

1. Siting of state offices in downtowns and village centers.
2. Prioritizing strengthening downtowns and village centers in state agency grants and technical assistance.
3. Limiting most state infrastructure funding to existing communities or places designated for growth by the state or local governments.
4. Purchase of easements and development rights to protect important natural habitat, farmlands, and to create greenbelts.
5. Brownfields: incentive program to facilitate clean-up of contaminated sites for commercial/industrial development.
6. Job creation tax credit to businesses that create new jobs within designated areas to spur development.
7. Streamlining regulatory processes to encourage development in desired areas.
8. Providing a balanced system of transportation options.
9. Asking all state agencies to review policies, programs and regulations to assure that they do not inadvertently promote sprawl development.

Further examination of these nine tools indicate that they have some common characteristics, namely they:

- A) Focus investments on developed areas, i.e. urban areas and downtowns.
- B) Target growth to areas that can sustain growth as identified through a locally based planning process.
- C) The growth management and targeting approach is often incentive based.

Program Analysis Findings

Using the aforementioned common tools and characteristics as measurement standards, we identified what programs seemed to provide the appropriate tool. This assessment is based upon the review of the program as it is currently in place or as proposed for modification.

Tools

We found that Rhode Island has in place the basic programs and policies to implement a smart growth management approach. In some cases, such as targeting programs to downtowns or areas identified in local comprehensive plans, we have in place numerous mechanisms. But the number of individual programs that can be used as a tool are not as important as how comprehensive some of these programs may be. For example, there is only one statute that governs the siting of state offices but it covers all building and leasing of such properties. In contrast, we found that numerous programs give some level of priority to projects or programs benefiting downtowns but the weight assigned to such criteria may not be sufficient to have the desired impact.

	Key Tools For Smart Growth Used By Other States	RI Programs
1	Siting of state offices in downtowns and village centers	1
2.	Prioritizing strengthening downtowns and village centers in state agency grants and technical assistance.	8
3.	Limiting most state infrastructure funding to existing communities or places designated for growth by the state or local governments.	4
4.	Purchase of easements and development rights to protect important natural habitat, farmlands, and to create greenbelts.	3
5.	Brownfields: incentive program to facilitate clean-up of contaminated sites for commercial/industrial development.	1
6.	Job creation tax credit to businesses that create new jobs within designated areas to spur development.	2
7.	Streamlining regulatory processes to encourage development in desired areas.	3
8.	Providing a balanced system of transportation options.	1
9.	Asking all state agencies to review polices, programs and regulations to assure that they do not inadvertently promote sprawl development.	1

Common Characteristics

In addition, we noted that numerous state programs addressed the most common characteristics of other state's growth management and targeting programs. This component of the analysis identifies the various Rhode Island programs according to one or more of the three general characteristics of growth management tools commonly used elsewhere. Some programs provide more than one tool.

Focused Urban Investment Tools

- State Properties
- Community Development Block Grants
- Economic Development Administration Grants (CEDS)
- Enterprise Zones
- Certificates of Critical Economic Concern
- EDC Financing Programs
- Permit Fees
- Affordable Housing

Investment Targeting Tools

- Comprehensive Plans
- Certificates of Critical Economic Concern
- EDC Financing Programs
- Mill Revitalization Program
- Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Transportation Access Management Program
- Compact Development Infrastructure
- School Construction Guidelines
- Affordable Housing

Investment Incentives

- Comprehensive Plans
- Community Development Block Grants
- Economic Development Administration Grants
- Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation Grants
- Transportation Improvement Program
- School Construction Guidelines

Recommendations

In the course of conducting this inventory and analysis, the Council remained cognizant of the Governor's final charge in his Executive Order:

5. The Council shall recommend to the Governor and the General Assembly any changes in state and federal laws, regulations or procedures necessary to encourage sustainable growth in Rhode Island.

The Growth Planning Council also attempted to be pragmatic in its approach and crafted the recommended changes to programs by attempting to adhere to certain principles.

- First and foremost, implement change through administrative action that can be directed by the Governor to his Cabinet. Limit legislative changes as much as possible.
- Presume that there are limited, or no additional, financial resources available.
- Do not create additional bureaucracy.
- Employ a bottoms-up approach wherever feasible, drawing upon the comprehensive planning process and other ongoing local and regional planning efforts.
- Recognize that land use regulation is controlled at the local level.

The recommended program changes generally conform to these principles. Most of the recommendations can be implemented administratively through directives of the Governor. There are few new activities recommended and therefore limited impacts on financial or administrative resources. Only one recommendation would appear to require legislative action.

The following tables present a brief summary of the program recommendations together with the lead agency and the type of action required. The table organizes the recommendations according to the program category they address.

Program	Agency	Recommendation	Action	Program
State Properties	DOA	Use as example of siting policy	A	Urban
Tax Credits	HPC	Initiate promotional campaign	N	Urban
Enterprise Zones	EDC	Assess compliance with Coordination Mandate	A	Urban
EDC Finance	EDC	Board establish goal of 50% of financing in urban areas	A	Urban
CDBG	DOA	Provide incentives for reuse/rehab	A	Urban
Wellhead Protection	WRB	Continue and expand water resource protection investment program	N	Target Growth
School Const.	DOE	Revise size and cost guidelines to favor rehab and multi-use facilities	A	Target Growth
Compact Development Infrastructure	Task Force	Task Force identify ways to provide infrastructure that supports compact development in rural areas	A	Target Growth
Brownfield's RLF	EDC	Establish assessment fee to capitalize RLF	L	Target Growth
Mill Buildings	EDC	Initiate promotional campaign	N	Target Growth
CCEC	EDC	Limit to EZ's, Brownfield's or rehab projects	A	Target Growth
Permit Fees	CRMC	Reduce fees for urban projects	A	Target Growth
Access Mgt.	RIDOT	Provide funds and technical assistance for local corridor preservation	N	Incentive
Open Space Grants	DEM	Increase advantage to enterprise zones and approved comp plans	A	Incentive
TIP	DOA	Increase advantage to enterprise zones and approved comp plans	A	Incentive
CEDS	DOA	Increase advantage to enterprise zones and approved comp plans	A	Incentive
Comprehensive Plans	DOA	Increase incentives for planning via state grant administration	A	Incentive

EXHIBIT 1

Please provide the following summary information (use additional sheets, as necessary):		
Agency	Respondent	Telephone
Title or Name of Project/Activity		
Description		
Role as Sprawl Deterrent		
Measurable Results in Last Two Years		
Role as Sprawl Contributor		
Funding Source/Amount		
Potential Improvements to State Agency Actions		
Can you identify any potential steps your agency could take in its programs, rules, and practices which would have a positive impact on deterring sprawl and strengthening city and town centers? Please describe:		